WEBSITE BOUTIQUE

Introduction: Website Building Process Guide for Clients

Website Boutique aims to provide a hassle-free and enjoyable website creation process for clients. We take pride in our professionalism and dedication to delivering high-quality websites that meet our clients' unique needs and preferences. We have created a step-by-step guide to building websites that ensures transparency and straightforward communication between our team and clients.

Here are the key points to note:

- Our website creation process is the same for all clients, regardless of size or budget.

- We encourage clients to review our step-by-step guide before deciding to work with us.

- With open communication and a thorough understanding of the process, our clients can expect a satisfying and rewarding collaboration with Website Boutique.

Step 1: Client Briefing and Budget

To ensure that we comprehend the project requirements and expectations, clients are requested to fill out a briefing form that includes important details such as page lists, eCommerce product collections, specific functionalities, and an estimated budget.

Clients can provide a basic draft site map to help us understand the navigation, header, footer, and page layout of their website. A simple hand-drawn site map is enough for a straightforward website. For websites with a lot of information or eCommerce sites, a formal site map is necessary and will be included in the project planning stages and budget. We use tools like https://octopus.do/ and https://www.gloomaps.com/ to create basic or detailed site maps for clients.

Step 2: Consultation and Discussion

The client and our team meet to review the brief and draft site map and discuss various possibilities for building the website. This involves choosing between platforms like WordPress with WooCommerce or Shopify, as well as deciding on

custom web designs or a customisable themed template (e.g., DIVI). Furthermore, we will talk about any additional functionality required, such as Instagram feeds, store locators, embedded maps, calendars, and booking systems, as well as design and colour preferences and other design components.

For custom-designed websites, clients can choose to work closely with our web designers to create a pixel-perfect, mobile-friendly design across all devices or opt to engage their own designers. If clients decide to utilise their own designers, we anticipate receiving comprehensible web design files and assets that take into account web accessibility, mobile-friendliness across all devices, and SEO. The final quote and timeline will be contingent on the quality of the assets submitted. We have previously encountered difficulties working with client-supplied design files, so a thorough review of these is a crucial aspect of the quoting and planning process.

On the other hand, clients can opt for a templated website using premium Shopify themes or the WordPress DIVI theme, which offers a quicker and more budget-friendly alternative. We are capable of making minor adjustments using theme styling settings and a mix of CSS styling alterations. While theme styling settings are included in the quote, any CSS styling modifications are billed separately and charged on an hourly basis.

Step 4: Finalising Quotes and Budget Management

Draft quotes and timing estimates are based on the results from the brief and discussions. Once we receive and review the client's assets and site map, we'll finalise the draft quote as a confirmed quote. In some cases, we may opt to work on a time and materials basis, particularly for complex designs. For projects with a budget of $2500 and below, we charge in blocks of ten hours, paid upfront. With each ten-hour block, clients receive an additional 2 hours of work free of charge, making this a cost-efficient and great value option for clients with smaller budgets to manage their funds effectively.

Step 5: Finalising Timing

For projects with a budget of $4K or more, we will provide a detailed critical path timing plan, detailing all steps of the process. This plan will include key dates for each stage, launch dates, and important milestones from the project kick-off to going live, as well as post-launch testing and follow-up actions. This structured approach ensures smooth project execution and timely delivery.

For projects below $4K, we will establish timings for each stage and communicate them via a simple email. Despite the less formal approach, we will still make sure to cover critical path elements, key dates, and important milestones to maintain transparency and keep the project on track.

In both cases, our focus is on delivering an efficient and well-organised project that meets the client's expectations and deadlines. We understand the importance of clear communication and will keep clients informed of any updates or changes to the timing plan as the project progresses.

Step 6: Custom Web Design (If required)

The custom web design stage may include a detailed site map generation stage and together with designs can last anywhere from 4 to 12 weeks, depending on the intricacy of the design. Our team collaborates closely with our designers to craft a design that aligns with the client's brief, whilst taking into account web accessibility and SEO. This stage generally involves two to three rounds of reviews and edits to ensure the design meets the client's expectations and receives their final approval.

Step 6: Website Build

The period between receiving the final approved site map and designs and the first review typically ranges from 4 to 8 weeks, depending on the complexity of the designs. We will discuss and agree with the client when they would like to conduct the first review before we commence the build. Some clients prefer to have the entire website built and make all edits in a single review, while others may want to check in after one or two pages have been constructed.

It is essential to understand that the design itself does not constitute the entire website. Numerous behind-the-scenes tasks, such as setting up navigation, adding functionality, adding pages, and other setup activities, are carried out during the initial stage of the build. Typically, the first two weeks focus on these setup tasks.

For a straightforward and simple template WordPress or Shopify website, the initial construction phase generally lasts 2 to 4 weeks, with the exact duration contingent on the website's complexity and the number of pages, products and blog posts involved. A variety of behind-the-scenes tasks, including setting up navigation, adding pages, and performing other setup activities, are undertaken during the early stages of the build. The first week typically concentrates on completing these foundational tasks.

Extra and intricate functionalities are quoted separately, and it may be necessary to divide the project into several phases. In such a scenario, the initial phase would concentrate on launching a minimum viable product, and subsequent phases could include the addition of more complicated features if needed.

Step 7: Completing the Website Build

The completion of the build process typically involves up to 3 rounds of edits and reviews. We continue working on the project until the client is satisfied with the designs, layout, and navigation. By the second review stage, the copy will be in place, allowing us to verify the layout. These review stages are generally incorporated into the quoted price; however, significant changes may incur additional hourly charges.

Step 8: Client Final Check and SEO Optimisation

At this stage, the client carries out a comprehensive final check of the website, ensuring all aspects meet their requirements. Simultaneously, our team focuses on completing the SEO optimisation process. This includes adding alt text to images, titles to links, setting up appropriate SEO page titles, adding meta descriptions, and making sure the website uses proper header tags (H1, H2, H3) throughout.

In addition to these tasks, we conduct an accessibility check to guarantee compliance with accessibility standards, ensuring that the website is user-friendly for all visitors, including those with disabilities. This step is essential to offer an inclusive browsing experience and to avoid potential accessibility-related issues in the future.

Throughout the entire process, we remain committed to working closely with the client, addressing any concerns and incorporating feedback to deliver a polished and professional final product that aligns with the client's vision and goals.

Step 9: Testing and Sign-Off

This is the final stage before going live. The concluding phase of the website build involves comprehensive testing. Our team starts at the homepage, beginning with the logo, and methodically works through the entire website, inspecting each page down to the footer. Throughout this process, we meticulously examine every aspect, including spelling, grammar, links, layouts, images, and navigation.

Before launching the website, we also carry out a final performance assessment, ensuring quick loading times and error-free functionality. If needed, we can add plugins like Yoast for additional SEO audits.

For websites that are relaunching, we also prepare a spreadsheet of existing and new domains so that permanent redirects can be established for pages or posts that no longer exist.

However, we also ask our clients to conduct their own testing. For e-commerce stores, clients must perform end-to-end purchase and fulfilment tests. Once both our team and the client have completed testing, the website can be signed off and considered ready for launch.

Step 10: Performance Check

We use Google PageSpeed Insights (https://developers.google.com/speed) and the Chrome Dev tool called Lighthouse to perform comprehensive performance checks before making the website live. These tools help us ensure that the website adheres to the best practices for speed, user experience, and overall performance.

Lighthouse is an open-source, automated tool integrated into the Google Chrome Developer Tools. It assesses the website's performance, accessibility, progressive web app standards, SEO, and best practices. Lighthouse generates a detailed report that identifies areas for improvement, making it easier for our team to optimise the website further.

By using tools like Google PageSpeed Insights and Lighthouse, we can identify and address any performance issues or bottlenecks, ensuring that the website provides an exceptional user experience across various devices and browsers. This thorough evaluation process helps us deliver a fast, responsive, and efficient website, ultimately contributing to better user satisfaction and improved search engine rankings.

Step 11: Going Live

The process of going live can take anywhere from 2 to 6 hours and largely depends on the hosting service and domain provider. For example, with GoDaddy, the process is relatively simple, but with providers like NetRegistry (Webcentral), it can take several hours as they are notoriously difficult to work with.

During the launch process, we map old domains to new ones and set up any necessary permanent redirects. Once the website is live, we review all admin settings and ensure the site is ready to be crawled by search engines. Please be aware that it can take up to two weeks for Google to crawl a new or updated website. While we cannot expedite this process, by creating a website with a clear structure and easy navigation, we can facilitate a smoother transition.

In our quote, we typically allocate 4 to 6 hours for going live.

Step 12: Post-Launch Testing and Performance Check

After the website goes live, we carry out further testing to guarantee optimal functionality and user experience. We conduct a final performance check, concentrating on site speed, responsiveness, and compatibility across various devices and browsers.

In addition to speed, we also verify that all links, images, and interactive elements are working correctly. Our team ensures that forms, checkout processes, and other crucial components are functioning smoothly and securely. If the website includes

integrations with third-party services such as email marketing platforms, analytics tools, or social media feeds, we confirm that these are properly connected and configured.

By carefully assessing the website's performance and functionality post-launch, we aim to deliver a seamless, efficient, and enjoyable experience for both our clients and their site visitors.

Step 13: Additional Services

Should you need further assistance, we also offer additional services to help clients set up:

Yoast SEO (Shopify & WordPress)
Google Analytics
Google Search Console
Instagram and Facebook shopping
Google Shopping
Shopify Markets
Email Marketing
Google My Business

These supplementary services can enhance your online presence, streamline marketing efforts, and ensure your website achieves optimal visibility and performance across various platforms.

Step 14: Training

We provide personalised training options, including face-to-face sessions and customised video tutorials tailored to your new website. Our video training is highly recommended, as it serves as a valuable resource you can refer back to whenever needed. These tutorials ensure you have a thorough understanding of your website's functionality and help you manage it effectively, making the most of your online presence.

Step 15: Managed Hosting and Regular Housekeeping

We provide managed hosting through our parent company, CodeLab Pty Ltd. Alternatively, you can arrange your own hosting. We highly recommend our hosting service, as it enables us to closely monitor your website and provide ongoing support. Moreover, we are quick to respond to bug fixes or issues, with no call centres, wait times, or hold music to contend with. As an added benefit, we offer a supplementary housekeeping service where we log in to your dashboard on a regular basis to check for updates, ensuring it remains secure and functions properly.